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RUEHNY/ODC OSLO NO  
RUEHNY/USDAO OSLO NO  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 0259  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0303  
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SUBJECT: DREAMS IN POLAR FOG: PROPOSED NORDIC DEFENSE AND  
SECURITY COOPERATION

REF: 08 OSLO 54

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Kevin . Johnson  
for reasons 1.4 b and d

1.(C) Summary: Challenged to re-invigorate Nordic cooperation, former Norwegian Foreign Minister (and father of PM Jens Stoltenberg) Thorvald Stoltenberg presented 13 recommendations proposing greater civil and military cooperation and a Nordic version of NATO's Article Five. Stoltenberg delivered his wide-ranging (and non-binding) recommendations at the February 9 meeting of the Nordic Foreign Ministers. Norway's current FM, Jonas Gahr Stoere, hailed the report as historic and modern. Reactions from other Norwegian policy-makers has been less enthusiastic, but several of the recommendations have potential to increase Nordic capabilities and cooperation in international operations, a plus for the UN and NATO. In addition, the U.S. could propose specific areas where we see Nordic cooperation contributing to NATO or U.S. priorities. End Summary.

A Nordic Article Five?  
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2.(C) The most attention-grabbing of Stoltenberg's ideas was his call for a Nordic declaration of solidarity, including a mutually binding security policy guarantee. In his introductory press conference, Stoltenberg stressed that this proposal was not designed to take the place of existing treaty commitments, but should be viewed as something additional. Nonetheless, this idea was seen by some as a potential challenge to Swedish and Finnish neutrality and to Norway's traditional transatlantic orientation. Reaction in Norway has been largely dismissive of the idea but it is easy to see echoes of a call by the Norwegian Socialist Left Party's defense spokesman for a division of labor in the Nordics with Finland responsible for a joint army, Sweden for the air force and Norway for the navy. Senior Norwegian officials including the PM's foreign policy advisor and the MFA's political director have privately indicated to us that there is little or no interest in a Nordic solidarity declaration in the GON.

Saving Money and Sharing Responsibilities  
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3.(U) Declining defense budgets across the Nordic region have already inspired the Chiefs of Defense (CHOD) of Norway, Sweden and Finland to conduct a study on areas of possible

cooperation. Stoltenberg expands on the CHODs' study, proposing joint medical units, transport and lift capability (both air and sea), cooperation in training and education (including firing and exercise ranges) and joint equipment upgrades and purchases. Stoltenberg singled out army material as particularly promising citing the common use of all Nordics (with the exception of non-military Iceland) of Leopard 2 battle tanks, CV-90 combat vehicles and Sisu Pasi armored personnel carriers. Stoltenberg also proposed developing a joint amphibious unit, based on current cooperation between Sweden and Finland, which could be deployed anywhere in the Nordics and in international operations.

4.(C) Lest Iceland feel neglected, Stoltenberg proposed that the Nordics take on part of the responsibility for air surveillance and patrolling over Iceland. Initially this would be through participation in the regular Northern Viking exercises, followed by rotations in the NATO air patrol rotations and a possible permanent presence at Keflavik air base. Norway and Denmark already participate in the NATO program. Swedish and Finnish participation would require finalization of an agreement between NATO and Sweden and Finland on data exchange with NATO's air defense system. In theory this sort of cooperation could be a practical example of cooperation under the Partnership for Peace program. Surprisingly, Norwegian officials have been very critical of this proposal, with the MFA's Political Director and the PM's International Advisor both expressing strong dislike for this item.

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#### Keeping an eye on Polar Bears and Russians

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5.(U) Maritime monitoring is a central focus of the report with three separate but interrelated recommendations. These include establishing a Nordic maritime monitoring system, a joint maritime response force, and a joint satellite system for surveillance and communications. The monitoring system and the satellite proposal all reflect the need for improvements in the ability to monitor civilian and military shipping, environmental data and pollution. This need will increase if shipping volume in the region increases due to sea ice melting or development of energy projects such as the Shtockman field. Norway is in the process of developing a civilian-military Barents Sea monitoring system called Barents Watch, and Sweden and Finland are currently expanding their joint defense surveillance system to the entire Baltic Sea. Stoltenberg calls for a joint Nordic effort to ensure that national efforts are combatable and do not replicate functions. A joint satellite would allow for complete and constant monitoring of the entire Nordic region, as well as enabling secure communications in the event of a crisis. Currently the Nordic nations purchase satellite services from U.S. and European suppliers which do not provide satisfactory coverage above 71 degrees north. Once a monitoring system is in place there will be a need for a response capability for search and rescue and other emergencies. This capability should include icebreakers fit for Arctic use. Although Baltic capabilities are strong, there are not currently enough resources to cover the vast sea areas under Norwegian, Danish (Greenland) and Icelandic control, particularly if shipping in the area increases.

#### Addressing 21st Century Challenges

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6.(U) Stoltenberg also proposed a number of ideas which would increase civil cooperation including a Nordic stabilization task force, a joint disaster response unit, a Nordic resource network to protect against cyber attacks, a war crimes investigation unit, cooperation between foreign services, and on Arctic issues. The need for cooperation in war crimes prosecution, protection of infrastructure from cyber attack

and on Arctic issues is clear and relatively non-controversial. Cooperation between foreign services is much more difficult and will likely be limited to countries where none of the Nordics have representation now.

7.(U) As envisioned, the Nordic stabilization task force would consist of military, humanitarian, state-building (police officers, judges, prison officers, election observers) and development assistance components. This unit would be intended for use in UN-led operations and for NATO, EU, AU or OSCE missions with a UN mandate. Stoltenberg proposes that the military forces allocated to this unit be drawn from those currently available for the EU Nordic Battle Group and the NATO Response Force.

Dreams or Reality?  
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8.(C) Comment: High defense costs, a genuine preference to work with other Nordics and clear regional needs are real factors which inspired the Stoltenberg study and which may result in some of his recommendations being followed. The Nordic Ministers will meet next on June 9 in Iceland and will announce which recommendations will be pursued. GON officials have uniformly stressed that where money can be saved and capabilities increased they are positive. They were much less positive about the grander ambitions, such as the Nordic solidarity declaration and taking over responsibility for Iceland's air patrols. Where this study could result in something of value is primarily in any increase in military, international operations and surveillance capacity. Joint Nordic transport capabilities, medical teams, amphibious units, a stabilization task force and maritime awareness could be important contributions to UN, NATO or U.S. missions.

19. (C) The U.S. should encourage Nordic cooperation to the

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extent that it increases the Nordics' willingness and ability to improve their internal and international capabilities to deal with global challenges. It may also be of benefit to propose specific issues where we see Nordic cooperation contributing to NATO or U.S. priorities, such as maritime monitoring of the Barents, the development of stabilization teams, increases in military capacity, prosecution of war criminals, etc.

WHITNEY